

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SANTIA 00755 262212Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 PRS-01 SS-15 SSO-00 INRE-00 INR-07

PM-04 L-03 H-01 DHA-02 /046 W

-----262224Z 056809 /62

O 262122Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3198

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0755

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

FOR ACTING ASST. SECRETARY LUERS FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (LAVIN, JAIME)

SUBJECT: JAIME LAVIN

REFS: (A) STATE 16135; (B) SANTIAGO 692

1. GOC FOREIGN MINISTER CARVAJAL ASKED ME TO CALL AT FOREIGN MINISTRY AFTERNOON JANUARY 26. AFTER AMENITIES, HE ASKED ME, IN LOW-KEY DISCUSSION, WHAT COULD BE DONE ABOUT THE UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR OF THE TORTURE CHARGES AGAINST FOREIGN OFFICE DIRECTOR GENERAL AIR FORCE CMDT. JAIME LAVIN.

2. I EXPLAINED TO CARVAJAL THAT BOTH THE DEPARTMENT AND THE EMBASSY WERE OF COURSE TAKEN ABACK BY ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST LAVIN, SINCE WE HAD OBVIOUSLY HAD NO INDICATION WHATEVER THAT ANY SUCH CHARGES WOULD BE MADE. I STATED THAT WE UNDERSTOOD DEPARTMENT WAS SEEKING TO INVESTIGATE CHARGES MADE BY JACK ANDERSON. IF THEY WERE UNTRUE, AS I COULD WELL BELIEVE, I HOPED THAT LAVIN WOULD MAKE A CATEGORIC DENIAL.

3. I GAVE CARVAJAL FOR HIS INFORMATION THE CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE WHICH WE HAD PREPARED HERE (SANTIAGO 0692).

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HE APPEARED PLEASED TO RECEIVE IT. HE THAN ASKED IF, IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE CHARGES WERE "TOTALLY FALSE," DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT ISSUE A STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE CHARGES WERE GROUNDLESS, TOGETHER WITH INFORMATION ABOUT LAVIN'S TRIP.

4. I TOLD CARVAJAL THAT DEPARTMENT WAS STILL SEEKING TO CHECK THE ACCURACY OF THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST LAVIN. WHILE THIS

PROCESS WAS CONTINUING, WE COULD OBVIOUSLY NOT STATE THAT CHARGES WERE FALSE. BUT PERHAPS DEPARTMENT COULD PROVIDE BACKGROUND MATERIAL OF TYPE CONTAINED IN OUR DRAFT GUIDANCE. CARVAJAL SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO STIR UP A PRESS POLEMIC, BUT THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF DEPARTMENT COULD COORDINATE WITH CHILEAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ON SOME STATEMENT ALONG THESE LINES. I SAID I WOULD ASK WASHINGTON WHETHER IT WOULD DO SO.

5. WE THEN GOT INTO QUESTION WHETHER LAVIN SHOULD STAY IN U.S. UNTIL FEBRUARY 4 AS SCHEDULED. CARVAJAL SAID HE WOULD BE TALKING BY TELEPHONE WITH LAVIN AS SOON AS LATTER RETURNED TO WASHINGTON, AND THEY WOULD OGY TO DECIDE AT THAT TIME. CARVAJAL REMARKED THAT IN ANY EVENT THERE WAS NO MUCH TIME LEFT FOR LAVIN'S STAY IN THE UNITED STATES.

6. ASSUMING LAVIN CATEGORICALLY AND CONVINCINGLY DENIES THE CHARGES, PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER DEPARTMENT WILL GO ON RECORD AS REQUESTED BY CARVAJAL. PERHAPS APPROACH IN EMBASSY'S DRAFT GUIDANCE WOULD BE PARTIALLY RESPONSIVE TO HIS REQUEST, WITHOUT PREJUDICING OUR POSITION.

POPPER

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